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The Weather Whisper

WHAT'S INSIDE?

Day in the Life: Electronics Technician

Joe Price, Electronics Technician

A day in the life of an Electronics Technician (ET) for the National Weather Service (NWS) can look pretty different depending on what day it happens to be. We provide the scheduled and the unscheduled maintenance for quite a few things. There are days we are tuning and realigning the radar system and others we're flushing cottonwood seeds out of air conditioners to keep them from overheating.

An average day starts when we come in and check with the meteorological team to make sure their equipment is working as it should be. So long as everything is doing its job, we move on to the plan built based on the service schedule. We have 8 ASOS sites located at airports, 14 weather radios, a radar tower, 2 backup power systems, and various facilities equipment that supports the NWS mission. On an ASOS day we do a quick weather check, equipment inventory,

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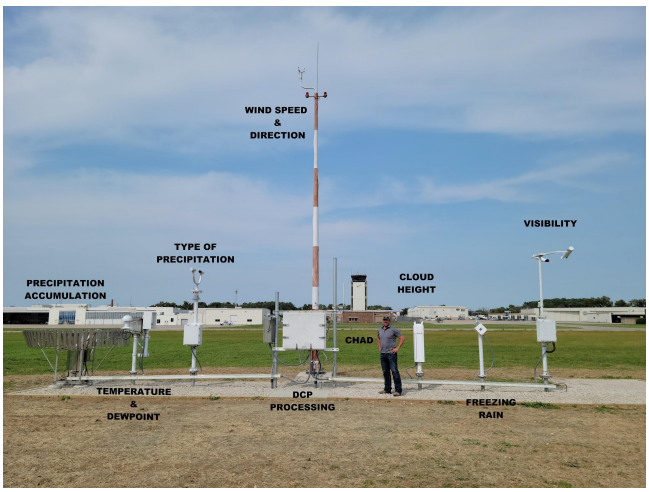

Automated Surface Observing System (ASOS), labeled with associated components and our ET, Chad! ETs maintain all components of these systems. ***Click image to view larger.***

(continued from previous page) and then load up for the off-site visit. The trip could be a 30 minute drive or 3-hour drive depending on which location we are visiting.

Electronics Technician Chad Curtis calibrating a power supply inside the Data Collection Package (DCP) which processes data from the sensors & transmits it to the tower.

Extreme weather and wildlife can occasionally try to stand in the way so we have to be prepared. Weather gear and wasp spray are a necessity. Once on site, we visit the tower to make sure the systems are reporting to air traffic control. To service an ASOS we need to test, calibrate, and clean the eight sensors that provide all the raw data to airports and Weather Forecasting Offices. Seven sensors are shown (previous page), and the eighth which measures air pressure is housed in a separate structure inside the tower where the data is processed and distributed over the local radio and phone lines. Then it's time to turn around and return to the office for paperwork.

July Weather Recap

Kristy Carter, Meteorologist

It has been a fairly busy end of June into July with multiple severe weather events in addition to some very hot and humid weather which sent heat indices well over 100°F as dew points surged into the 70s to even 80°F or more between July 25 and July 28. Events of note include another derecho that started near the IA/NE border early in the morning of June 29 intensifying as storms tracked east into Illinois and beyond with many reports of tree and power line damage across southern Iowa *[Read more: WFO DVN Summary; IEM Feature]*. More morning storms occurred on July 12 with many reports of strong wind gusts and wind damage in addition to some heavy rain and hail reports. Repeated storms led to the issuance of a Flash Flood Warning in portions of central Boone and east central Greene counties. Storms overnight through the morning of July 17 caused a portion of Highway 92 near Fontanelle, IA to be covered completely in nickel size hail. The warm and moist conditions in place at the end of this month allowed for storms to organize through the afternoon and evening of July 28 causing wind damage in portions of east central into eastern Iowa with a 93 mph wind gust measured at the Marshalltown airport! A tornado caused some damage in portions of southern Franklin into northern Hardin counties with one of the initial storms that formed. Large hail also occurred with some of the storms, the largest near Denver, IA at 2.75" (baseball).

On the Cover:
Damaged corn from the tornado that developed in southwest Franklin County on July 28, 2023. Photo courtesy of Franklin County EMA.

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